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Claims 1-8 are pending in the application.

Claims 1-3 and 5-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,032,116 to Asghar et al. in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0046021 to Cox et al.; and claims 4 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Asghar et al. in view of Cox et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,098,036 to Zinser, Jr. et al. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections.

The Examiner relied upon the description of comparing a LSP of a speech input signal with that of a reference signal in Asghar et al. as alleged disclosure of the claimed calculating function unit; and relied upon the description of deleting one of adjacent frames having a distance between LSP coefficients thereof less than or equal to a predefined threshold in Cox et al. as alleged suggestion of the claimed adjusting function unit.

Applicant respectfully points out that the cited portions of Cox et al. only include description of deleting a frame when a distance is below or equal to a threshold,

“if the Euclidean distance between the line spectrum pair (LSP) coefficients in adjacent frames is less than or equal to a predefined threshold T. In such a case, one of the frames is then simply deleted from the bitstream.” Paragraph [0010] of Cox et al.

As such, even assuming, arguendo, that it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the claimed invention was made to combine Asghar et al. and Cox et al., such a combination would still have failed to disclose or suggest the claimed feature of adjusting linear spectrum pairs so that a distance between linear spectrum pairs of adjacent orders closer in distance become closer.

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“[a] speech processing apparatus for enhancing formant components of speech comprising:  
a calculating function unit which calculates a distance between adjacent orders of linear spectrum pairs of a speech signal,  
an adjusting function unit which adjusts the linear spectrum pairs so that a distance between linear spectrum pairs of adjacent orders closer in distance become closer, and  
an outputting function unit which combines and outputs a speech signal based on the adjusted linear spectrum pairs,” as recited in claim 1. (Emphasis added)

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1, together with claims 2-3 dependent therefrom, is patentable over Asghar et al. and Cox et al. for at least the above-stated reasons. Claim 5 incorporates features that correspond to those of claim 1 cited above, and is, therefore, together with claims 6-7 dependent therefrom, patentable over the cited references for at least the same reasons. The Examiner relied upon Zinser, Jr. et al. as a combining reference to specifically address additional features recited in claims 4 and 8, which depend from claims 1 and 5, respectively. As such, the addition of this reference would still have failed to cure the above-described deficiencies of Asghar et al. and Cox et al., even assuming, arguendo, that such an addition would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the claimed invention was made. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 4 and 8, which depend from claims 1 and 5, respectively, are patentable over the cited references for at least the foregoing reasons.

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

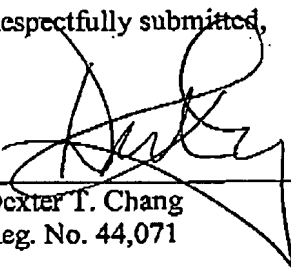
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Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



Dexter T. Chang  
Reg. No. 44,071

CUSTOMER NUMBER 026304

Telephone: (212) 940-6384

Fax: (212) 940-8986 or 8987

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